

## LET’S BEGIN WITH PRAYER:

Father we give thanks for our lives in Australia. There is so much for us to appreciate. Yet even here, Lord, there are times when we feel cheated and let down. We ask, Lord, what it must be like in Bangladesh, Pakistan, and other places where there is no support for anyone in need. Help us to be more giving and forgiving.

Father, your Spirit sustains us and encourages us in all things. Even in life’s darkest hour you are there for us. When life could break us, we can turn to you, and your Son, our risen Lord who joins us in our struggle ( Luke 24 :13—19).

Thank you Lord for all these things. Amen

## SONG: SIS 302 *by Andrae Crouch*

Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name,  
Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name,  
He has done great things, He has done great things, He has done great things,  
Bless his holy name.

© 1973 Bud John Songs, Inc. (Admin. by SHOUT! Music Publishing Australia)  
Used by permission CCLI 509237

## SONG: SIS 303 *by Daniel Iverson*

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me,  
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me,  
Break me, melt me, mould me, fill me,  
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

© Music: 1935. Renewed 1963 Birdwing Music (Admin. by SHOUT! Music Publishing Australia)  
Used by permission CCLI 509237

## PRAYERS FOR THE WORLD: Barnabas focus : Eritrea

Father God our prayer focus this day is on Eritrea: Poverty, war, injustice are daily issues. The war of independence from Ethiopia, and an ongoing conflict in Tigre province add to the daily grind to survive. We have heard of Sunday school classes being raided by the police searching for those who serve you - even children. Lord in this predominantly Muslim nation, there are Christians who meet furtively, and fellowship in fear. Our thoughts turn now to them. We pray for strength and an anointing of your Spirit to sustain them in their struggle. Be near them Lord just as you drew near to the broken disciples on the Emmaus road.

## BIBLE READINGS:

- Isaiah 61 :1-4

“The spirit of the sovereign Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim the good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn.”

- Acts 2: 14-15, 36-41

Then Peter stood up with the eleven, raised his voice, and addressed the crowd. Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem listen carefully to what I say. These people are not drunk as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning.

Let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah. When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the others: “Brothers, what shall we do?” Peter replied “Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit ... and save yourselves from this corrupt generation.”

## MESSAGE:

Have you ever been broken hearted? In our teen years, probably we all experienced one or more relationship break ups. Perhaps in later years also. I know for me it was the loss of my sister and later my parents that “broke” me.

The readings today say a lot about brokenness. Incredible Isaiah prophesies that the coming Messiah will bind up the broken hearted. Jesus used these words in Luke 4:18 stopping in mid 61:2, saying “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing” (Luke 4:21). Then follows his expulsion from his home town. I wonder how that affected Jesus. Was he hurt, disappointed, broken? Regardless, he continued his ministry in Capernaum. It did not stop his call to ministry.

Jeremiah is known as the weeping prophet due to his much foreboding of the future for Judah and his lament of the spiritual failure of his people. For example, the valley of Hinnon, near Jerusalem, was a place of sacrifice for children to the god Moloch (Canaan) and Baal (Assyria). One King of Judah had his illegitimate sons sacrificed there. Such wickedness must have driven Jeremiah to brokenness. Then, along came the boy king Josiah, who later crusaded against the wickedness, going around the country smashing and destroying pagan temples, bringing Judah back to God's law. So after about 20 years of struggle, Jeremiah at last had a righteous sovereign. Then, against God's advice, Josiah did a foolhardy thing, and was killed in battle. Jeremiah was broken (Jer 35:15), and mourned Josiah's death greatly. Then another evil king took the throne and Jeremiah was back where he started, in a world of evil (Jer 8). What a setback!

What life throws up for us can break us – grief and loss, love lost, hopes unfulfilled – there is plenty of this in the Word and the world. When the apostle Peter spoke to the people in Acts 2:36 he blamed them for the death of Jesus – no holds barred – they “were cut to the heart”, broken hearted, but asked the question “What then can we do?” Again Peter is forthright: “Repent and be baptised, EVERYONE of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit ... save yourselves from this corrupt generation”.

Our Lord Jesus knows about broken heartedness. In Luke 24, the risen Jesus finds and walks with those who are running scared, broken, and totally lost. He draws near, walks alongside, and joins them in a search for meaning. The same applies to Thomas and Peter. Our Lord knows about being broken as he himself almost was. Time and again I am amazed at the absolute privilege of having a Messiah who is ready to draw near in our earthly struggle --“binding up the broken hearted”. There are some faiths awaiting a messiah—the bahai await the “bab”, Sikhs the Guru, the Jews the Messiah — one hopes they are not too disappointed!

As our messiah cares for and heals the broken hearted, may he richly bless you!!

SONG: “Lord Of The Dance”: (Altogether Now No. 27) by SB Carter

1. I danced in the morning when the world was begun  
And I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun;  
And I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth,  
At Bethlehem I had my birth.  
  
*Dance then, wherever you may be,  
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he,  
And I'll lead you all wherever you may be,  
And I'll lead you all in the Dance, said he.*
2. I danced for the scribe and the Pharisee,  
But they would not Dance and they wouldn't follow me,  
I danced for the fishermen for James and John –  
They came with me and the Dance went on...
3. I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame;  
The holy people said it was a shame,  
They whipped and they stripped and they hung me high,  
And they left me there on a cross to die...
4. I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black –  
It's hard to dance with the devil on your back,  
They buried my body and they thought I'd gone,  
But I am the Dance, and I still go on...
5. They cut me down and I leapt up high:  
I am the life that'll never, never die;  
I'll live in you and you'll live in me –  
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he...

© Stainer & Bell Ltd

Used by permission CCLI 509237

**Blessing:**

May peace, and comfort in all of life's struggles be yours, Father Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen

*This service was prepared by Grant Jewell for HopeNet SA*